

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on Page 5, lines 18-19 with the following amended paragraph:

Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a less complicated system and method for accessing such electronic communications systems.

Please replace the paragraphs beginning on Page 9, lines 14-30 through page 10, line 1 with the following amended paragraphs:

“Client device” or “Client system” 10 will be understood in this description to include any device used ~~for to~~ access an electronic communications network, typically a data processing system. Such devices may include any type of personal computer, Internet station, television set-top device, palm computers, hand-held computers, or portable computers such as notebook or laptop computers. In addition, such client devices may effectively employ the present invention when utilizing a variety of operating systems or programming languages, such as the “Windows”, “Windows 95”, “Macintosh”, “Windows NT” or “UNIX” operating systems.

As illustrated in FIGS. 1-5, the system and method of the present invention provides a client device ~~110~~ 10 with direct high speed access to an electronic communications network 310 (“ECN”), such as the Internet, using specialized access ports 160 placed in public places, which are linked to a server 110, which in turn provides transmission access to the ECN 310.

Optionally, the server 110 is also linked via the ECN 310 to a network management server 410. The network management server preferably runs network management software for performing billing transaction processing, remote network management and usage statistical reporting. It

should be understood that in one embodiment of the present invention, a plurality of servers 110 are in communication with the network management server in the manner described herein.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on Page 10, lines 20-30 through page 11, lines 1-9 with the following amended paragraph:

FIG. 2 is a block diagram showing a server system 110. In operation, the client system 10 connects with an electronic communications network 310 through the server system 110. The server system includes a processor unit 120. In operation, the processor operates various software, including server software 130 adapted for establishing a communications link both with the client system 10 and the electronic communications network 310. Operation of the server software 130 is discussed in more detail below. Generally speaking, once a communications link is established with the client system 10 and electronic communications network 310 ("ECN"), the server 110 acts as in an interface between the client system 10 and the electronic communications network 310. In one embodiment, the server 110 includes a communications interface 140 for communication with the ECN 310. This communications interface includes the normal apparatus for such communications, such as for example a T1 transmission line and attendant apparatus. Likewise, a second interface 150 is also preferred for communicating with the client system access port 160. The access port 160 preferably is an Ethernet communications port. The second interface 150 receives communications from the access port 160, such as via wire or via wireless transmission. Preferably both the access port 160 and client system 10 are equipped for communications using an Ethernet link, such as using an Ethernet card 60 built in to the client system 10. FIGS. 6A, 6B and 6C also illustrate

exemplary transportable media implementing the server software (which may be in any form, such as source code, compiled or binary versions).

Please replace the paragraph beginning on Page 11, lines 10-19 with the following amended paragraph:

The server system 110 preferably ~~communicates~~ communicates with the ECN via a high speed communications link, such as a T1, ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line), ISDN and other high speed connection means. The relevant communications interface of the client system 60 access port 160 and server system 150 provides high speed throughput allowing the client system 10 to receive the benefit of the high speed communications link established by the server 110. Any communications interfaces 60, 150 may be used, although it is preferred that they provide a bandwidth or data throughput comparable to the communications link achieved by the server system 110 with the ECN 310. In alternative embodiments, the communications interfaces 60, 150 provide a slower throughput or narrower bandwidth than that achieved by the link between the server system 110 and the ECN 310.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on Page 12, lines 11-22 with the following amended paragraph:

As another illustrative example, as shown in FIG. 4A, the access ports 160 are provided in hotel or motel rooms, in hotels or motels (hereafter collectively referred to as "hotels") equipped with a hotel server ~~110~~ 210. These hotel rooms have local terminals 170. Local terminals 170 also may be located in public areas. By way of illustration, hotel servers ~~110~~ 210 and local terminals 170 are available from ATCOM/Info, San Diego, California. The local

terminals 170 each may include a keyboard, display and CPU (not shown) to provide in-room computing capability. The local terminals 170 are equipped with access ports 160, either within the housing of the local terminal 170 or in a separate housing. The local terminals are linked via wires 165 or wireless communication links 167 with the hotel server ~~110~~ 210. Alternatively, this embodiment may be practiced for other forms of structures such as cruise ships in which terminals 170 are situated in cabins or staterooms, or even public areas of the ship.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on Page 18, lines 16-22 with the following amended paragraph:

The ECN access session is represented in FIG. 9 by diagram box 665. In a preferred embodiment, the user is given the ~~connected~~ connection to the Internet, as discussed above. Alternatively, the user may be connected to another form of ECN. For example, the user may be connected to an on-line service. Alternatively, the user may be given an option of having a telephonic communications session activated, such as by accessing a dial-up server, such as a dial-up server providing wide area network, database or bulletin board system access.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on Page 21, lines 24-30 through Page 22, lines 1-10 with the following amended paragraph:

A disconnect sequence for the client software 90 is illustrated in FIG. 14. In operation, at any time during operation of the client software, such as during an ECN session (indicated by box 665 in Fig. 9), or preferably at any other time as well, a user of the client software 90 may commence a disconnect sequence. Preferably this is done by using an input device 70, such as appoint and click device, to point on a disconnect button (this may say, for example, "end session

now" or "sign off" or "stop"). Such a disconnect request is indicated by box 731 in FIG. 14. Preferably the client software 90 then displays a disconnect option screen 565 for the user to confirm disconnect, in step 732. An exemplary disconnect option screen 565 is illustrated in FIG. 15. This exemplary screen includes a choice selection, namely for the user to confirm the disconnect selection 567 or to disclaim the disconnect choice 569 and remain connected and return to other operations of the client software, such as returning to the ECN session. In the illustrated example, the user is give given the choice of selecting "Yes" 567 to disconnect, or "No" 569 to remain connected. Preferably a point and click device issued to indicate the selection 567, 569. In operation of the client software 90, if option 567 is selected, i.e., confirming disconnect, then "yes" is returned in step 733 illustrated in FIG. 14. If confirmation of disconnection is not received, by selection of option 569, "no" is returned in step 733.